LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (Canceled)

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A composition useful for conditioning sludge ~~characterised in that~~ wherein it is in the form of an emulsion comprising in aqueous phase or phases and separately at least one mineral cation of a charge of greater than or equal to 2 and a cationic polyelectrolyte.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in claim 29 ~~1 or claim 2~~ ~~characterised in that~~ wherein it is in the form of an invert water-in-oil emulsion in which said mineral cation and said cationic polyelectrolyte are distributed in separate water droplets in the oily phase.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in claim 29 ~~1 or claim 2~~ ~~characterised in that~~ wherein it is in the form of a double water/oil/water emulsion which comprises a continuous aqueous phase in which an oily phase is dispersed, and a second aqueous phase dispersed in the oily phase, wherein ~~in which~~ the mineral cation is present ~~at the level of~~ in the continuous aqueous phase and the cationic polyelectrolyte is distributed at least in part in water droplets constituting the second aqueous phase ~~which is dispersed in the oily phase~~.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the mineral cation is selected from Mg^{2+}, La^{3+}, Fe^{3+}, Al^{3+}, Zr^{4+} and their polymerised forms when they exist.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in claim 5 ~~characterised in that~~ wherein said mineral cation is Al^{3+} or one of its polymerised forms.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the mineral cation is in the form of a water-soluble salt [selected preferably from chlorides, nitrates, sulfates and acetates].

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the mineral cation is an aluminum chloride or one of its polymerised forms.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the mineral cation is used in a proportion of between 0.05 and 2 moles~~, in particular between 0.49 and 1.8 moles~~ per kg of said composition.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the cationic polyelectrolyte is of a molecular weight of higher than $1 \cdot 10^6$ ~~1.10^6~~.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the cationic polyelectrolyte is selected from polyacrylamides, oxides of polyethylenes, polyvinylpyrrolidones, and cationic polymers of natural origin.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein said cationic polyelectrolyte is a polyacrylamide having between 0.1% and 15% of cationic charge.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the cationic polyelectrolyte is selected from copolymers of polyacrylamide with cationic monomers or polyacrylamides modified in accordance with the Mannich reaction.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the polyelectrolyte is a cationic polyacrylamide copolymer selected from ~~the~~ copolymers acrylamides/halide~~, preferably chloride,~~ of diallyldialkylammonium, ~~the~~ copolymers diaminoalkylmethacrylate/acrylamides and ~~the~~ copolymers dialkylaminoalkylmethacrylates/acrylamides.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the cationic polyelectrolyte is used in a proportion of at most 10% ~~and preferably between 0.3% and 8%~~ by weight of said composition.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the mineral cation is a polyaluminum chloride and the cationic polyelectrolyte is a copolymer acrylamide/diallyldimethylammonium chloride of a molecular weight ~~of~~ on the order of ~~3.10^6~~ $3 \cdot 10^6$.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in ~~one of the preceding claims characterised in that~~ claim 29 wherein the mineral cation and the polyelectrolyte are used in such a way that the mineral cation/cationic polyelectrolyte molar ratio is between $1 \cdot 10^2$ and $8 \cdot 10^6$ ~~1.10^2 and 8.10^6, in particular between 1.10^5 and 8.10^6~~.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A composition as set forth in claim 17 ~~characterised in that~~ wherein when the mineral cation is polyaluminum chloride and the polyelectrolyte[,] is a copolymer acrylamide/diallyldimethylammonium chloride, the mineral cation/cationic polyelectrolyte weight ratio is between 0.1 and 15 ~~and more particularly between 0.1 and 10~~.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): ~~Use of a~~ Method of using the composition as set forth in claim 29 ~~one of claims 1 through 18~~ for the treatment of an aqueous medium, comprising

contacting the composition with the aqueous medium ~~media, in particular waste, urban or industrial water~~.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): ~~Use of a~~ Method of using the composition as set forth in claim 29, ~~one of claims 1 through 18~~ for the treatment of a biological ~~sludges from the purification of dirty or waste water, for the purposes of dehydration thereof~~ sludge, comprising contacting the composition with the biological sludge.

Claim 21 (New): A composition as set forth in claim 7 wherein the water-soluble salt is selected from the group consisting of a chloride, nitride, sulfate and acetate.

Claim 22 (New): A composition as set forth in claim 9 wherein the mineral cation is used in a proportion of between 0.49 and 1.8 moles per kg of said composition.

Claim 23 (New): A composition as set forth in claim 14 wherein the polyelectrolyte is selected from the copolymers acrylamides/chloride of diallyldialkylammonium.

Claim 24 (New): A composition as set forth in claim 15 wherein the cationic polyelectrolyte is used in a proportion of between 0.3% and 8% by weight of said composition.

Claim 25 (New): A composition as set forth in claim 17 wherein the mineral cation and the polyelectrolyte are used in such a way that the mineral cation/cationic polyelectrolyte molar ratio is between $1 \cdot 10^3$ and $8 \cdot 10^6$.

Claim 26 (New): A composition as set forth in claim 18 wherein when the mineral cation is polyaluminum chloride and the polyelectrolyte is a copolymer acrylamide/ diallyldimethyl-ammonium chloride, the mineral cation/cationic polyelectrolyte weight ratio is between 0.1 and 10.

Claim 27 (New): A method as set forth in claim 19, wherein the aqueous medium comprises waste, urban or industrial water.

Claim 28 (New): A method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the biological sludge is obtained from purification of dirty or waste water, and the treated biological sludge is subsequently dehydrated.

Claim 29 (New): A composition useful for conditioning sludge obtained by mixing at least one invert emulsion containing at least one cationic polyelectrolyte with an aqueous solution containing at least one mineral cation with a charge of greater than or equal to 2.

Claim 30 (New): A composition useful for conditioning sludge obtained by mixing at least one invert emulsion containing at least one cationic polyelectrolyte with an invert emulsion

containing at least one mineral cation with a charge of greater than or equal to 2, wherein said composition is in the form of an invert water-in-oil emulsion in which said mineral cation and said cationic polyelectrolyte are distributed in separate water droplets in the oily phase.